AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method of creating a data path for a process executing on a server coupled to a storage area network (SAN), the SAN providing connectivity between the server and a storage device in the SAN, the method comprising:

parameterizing a set of attributes for a desired data path between the process and the storage device of the SAN; and

constructing the data path that provides said set of attributes, wherein said constructing step further comprises:

searching the SAN for a set of candidate storage devices;

identifying a candidate data path from the server to each candidate storage device of said set of candidate storage devices;

evaluating each said candidate data path against the set of attributes to rank said candidate data paths from a best candidate data path to a least best candidate data path according to the attributes; and

selecting said best candidate data path as the data path to be constructed by said constructing step.

2.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said set of attributes includes a pre-defined template.

3.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein said set of attributes includes a data path owner, application, and the server on which the application is executing.

4.   (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein said pre-defined template specifies a set of performance, availability, and cost metrics for the desired data path.

5.   (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein said set of performance and availability metrics includes at least one of a number of threads, a security level, and a default volume size and characteristics, default path characteristics.

6.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said parameterizing step includes a step of entering a user-defined attribute for inclusion in said set of attributes.

7.   (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein said entering step includes entry of said user-defined attribute by use of a graphical user interface coupled to the SAN.

8.   (Canceled)

9.   (Previously Presented) ~~The method of claim 1~~ A method of creating a data path for a process executing on a server coupled to a storage area network (SAN), the SAN providing connectivity between the server and a storage device in the SAN, the method comprising:
        parameterizing a set of attributes for a desired data path between the process and the storage device of the SAN; and
        constructing the data path that provides said set of attributes, wherein said constructing step further comprises:
                searching the SAN for a set of candidate storage devices;
                ~~constructing~~identifying a candidate data path from the server to each candidate storage device of said set of candidate storage devices;
                evaluating each said candidate data path against ~~a selection metric~~the set of attributes to rank said candidate data paths from a best candidate data path to a least best candidate data path according to said ~~selection metric~~set of attributes;
                presenting said ranked candidate data paths to a user for selection; and
                selecting a user-selected candidate data path as the data path to be constructed by said constructing step.

10.   (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said presenting step recommends said best candidate data path for selection by said user.

11.   (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein said best candidate data path is presented as a default selection at said selecting step.

12.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 wherein said selection metric includes storage device uptime information.

13.   (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said selection metric includes performance information.

14.   (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said selection metric includes cost calculation.

15.   (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said selection metric includes best SAN practices information.

16.   (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said selection metric includes learned state and usage information of the SAN.

17.   (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said searching step prequalifies a subset of candidate data paths by finding those candidates that satisfy a pre-created policy prior to application of said evaluating step.

18.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said constructed data path includes all physical, logical and security component identification and configuration information sufficient to operably link the process to an identified data volume of the SAN.

19.   (Canceled)

20.   (Canceled)

21.   (Canceled)

22.   (Canceled)

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26.   (Canceled)

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49.   (Canceled)